

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a garment for holding items when traveling, and more particularly, to an overcoat having an arrangement of pockets and other means on the inner lining for packing articles of clothing, toiletries and other items for travel.

Discussion of the Related Art

Transporting luggage when traveling on a commercial airliner can be a troublesome matter for passengers and is often the cause of much anxiety. Due to limitations of aisle widths, overhead luggage compartment size and other safety concerns, virtually all commercial airlines impose restrictions which limit the size of luggage pieces that can be carried onto the aircraft by passengers. Luggage articles which do not meet the size restrictions are required to be checked at the airline baggage counter for stowage by airline personnel in the luggage compartment of the aircraft. Due to delays in claiming checked luggage at the destination, as well as the inevitable possibility that one's luggage may be lost, particularly when changing planes in different cities, many travelers prefer to carry all of their belongings onto the aircraft for stowage in the cabin compartments. However, the carry-on baggage restrictions imposed by airlines can present a real challenge to the airline passenger, particularly after the events of September 11, 2001 which has led to

increased security measures in the airline industry. Carry-on luggage is now restricted to one suitcase of limited size and one personal item (e.g. a laptop computer, purse, briefcase, etc.). These new baggage restrictions, which are now strictly enforced throughout the airline industry, severely limit the carry-on capacity of passengers.

It is important to note that articles of clothing worn or carried by the airline passenger are not included within the carry-on baggage restrictions. Therefore, an airline passenger is permitted to carry one suitcase (of limited size), a personal item (e.g. laptop, purse, briefcase, etc.), as well as a garment, such as a coat or jacket onto the aircraft for storage in an overhead compartment or under the passenger's seat. The garment may be worn by the passenger or carried (e.g. draped over one's arm) when boarding the plane and is not considered as an item under the current carry-on baggage restrictions.

The present invention significantly increases the carry-on capacity of an airline passenger by providing a means of packing clothing articles, toiletries and other items within a garment which can be carried onto a commercial airliner as a third carry-on item, along with a carry-on suitcase and other personal item under the present carry-on baggage restrictions in the airline industry.

Summary of the Invention

The present invention is directed to a garment adapted for packing articles of clothing and other items therein for traveling, particularly on a commercial airliner. In a preferred embodiment, the garment is in the form of an overcoat or trench coat and is free of any metal components. An arrangement of pockets of varying size and dimension is provided on the inside of the garment for holding the clothing articles and other items therein. In the preferred embodiment, each of the pockets is defined by a panel which is sewn to an inner lining of the garment along the sides and bottom periphery. The pocket panel separates from the lining along the top or side to provide a pocket opening which is secured closed, to hold the items therein, with the use of a releasable fastening mechanism such as plastic or nylon zippers or snaps, an elastic band, or hook and loop fasteners. At least some of the pockets are provided with straps or other means for securing trousers and other items of clothing within the pockets in a manner which limits movement, sagging and wrinkling of the clothing items. The garment's inner lining is further provided with straps for securing smaller articles, such as rolled t-shirts and socks. The pocket panels are preferably formed of a mesh material to provide ventilation and ease of visual inspection of the contents packed in the pockets. In at least one embodiment, the entire lining, including the pockets, is removable from a remainder of the garment.

Objects and Advantages of the Invention

With the foregoing in mind, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide a travel garment which functions as luggage for packing soft items including a wide variety of clothing articles and toiletries.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a travel garment in the form of an overcoat which includes a plurality of pockets arranged on an inner lining for holding a variety of clothing articles and other items therein when traveling.

It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a travel garment in the form of an overcoat which is adapted to hold a variety of clothing articles and other items therein and which significantly increases the carry-on capacity of an airline passenger.

It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a travel garment which is adapted for packing clothing articles and other items therein and which effectively overcomes the severe carry-on baggage restrictions in the airline industry by allowing a passenger to carry the travel garment, fully packed with clothing and other articles, as a third item in addition to the two permitted carry-on items (i.e. a small suitcase and personal item).

It is yet a further object of the present invention to provide a travel garment which is particularly adapted to hold a large number of articles of clothing and other items therein, similar to a conventional piece of luggage, and which can be conveniently worn on the user when traveling, thereby leaving

the user's arms free to carry other items such as a suitcase, briefcase, laptop computer, purse or the like.

It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a travel garment which is adapted to hold a variety of clothing articles and other items therein and which is light weight, relatively inexpensive and free of any metal elements which would otherwise trigger a metal detecting device at a security checkpoint.

It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a travel garment which is adapted to hold a variety of clothing articles and other items therein, and wherein the garment includes see-through pockets to enable ease of visual inspection of the contents at security check points, thereby avoiding delays and stressful searches.

These and other objects and advantages of the invention are more readily apparent with reference to the following detailed description and the accompanying drawings.

Brief Description of the Drawings

For a fuller understanding of the nature of the present invention, reference should be made to the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a front, outside perspective view of the travel garment of the present invention in the form of an overcoat;

Figure 2 is a front perspective view of the travel garment of the Figure 1 shown open to reveal an inner lining and a plurality of storage pockets;

Figure 3 is a front perspective view of the travel garment of Figures 1 and 2 shown open to illustrate various articles of clothing neatly packed and contained within the pockets on the inner lining of the garments; and

Figure 4 is an exploded perspective view of the travel garment showing the inner lining with pockets removed from the shell of the garment.

Like reference numerals refer to like parts throughout the several views of the drawings.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiment

Referring to the several views of the drawings, the travel garment of the present invention is shown and generally indicated as 10. The travel garment 10 is particularly suited for travel on a commercial airliner to increase the carry-on baggage capacity of a passenger within current restrictions in the airline industry.

As seen throughout the several views of the drawings, a preferred embodiment of the travel garment 10 is in the form of a coat 12. The coat 12 is preferably in the form of a trench coat or overcoat which extends well below the waist when worn on the user, thereby providing for a maximum storage capacity for clothing and other items, as discussed more fully hereinafter. The coat 12 includes an outer shell 14 with a main body 15 and sleeves 26. The shell 14 includes an outer facing side 16 and an inner side 18. The main body

15 is defined primarily by a back panel 20, a left front panel 22 and a right front panel 24 which may be secured closed with the use of buttons 29 or other suitable closure means in the conventional manner. The coat may further include a collar 28.

Referring to Figures 2-4, the garment 10 further includes a lining 30 having an inside surface 32. The lining 30 may be permanently fabricated to the inner side of the garment shell 14 or, alternatively, the lining 30 may be removable, as seen in Figure 4. In the instance that the lining 30 is removable, means for securing the lining 30 to the shell 14 are provided, as indicated as 34. Specifically, a nylon zipper, buttons or other fasteners may be provided for securing the lining 30 in place within the outer shell 14.

The lining 30 of the garment 10 is provided with a plurality of pockets 40 which are structured, sized and arranged for carrying a variety of clothing articles and other items therein. Specifically, the pockets positioned against the back panel 20 of the garment may be larger for holding dress shirts 100 and trousers or dress slacks 110. As seen in Figure 3, the upper center pocket, which is positioned against the back panel of the garment, is particularly suited for holding folded dress shirts 100 therein. The bottom center pocket is particularly suited for holding dress slacks 110. Other pockets 40 positioned against the inner side of the left and right front panels 22, 24 of the garment are structured, sized and arranged for holding smaller articles of clothing such as shorts, t-shirts, undergarments 130, socks 120 and men's ties 140.

Each of the pockets 40 is formed by a panel 42 which is stitched or otherwise secured to the inside surface 32 of the lining 30 along the side edges 44 and bottom edge 46. The top edge 48 of the panel 42 separates from the lining 30 to provide an opening 50 for inserting and removing the articles within the pocket 40. Accordingly, the pocket is formed between the panel 42 and the inside surface 32 of the lining 30. In a preferred embodiment, the panels 42 of the pocket 40 are formed of a open mesh material, as seen in Figures 2-4, thereby providing for improved ventilation while also permitting ease of visual inspection of the contents held within the pockets 40. This helps to avoid delays at security checkpoints in an airport or other venue. It should be noted that the pocket opening 50 may be provided along one of the side edges 44 as an alternative structure. In this instance, the top edge 48 of the pocket panel 42 may or may not be permanently secured to the lining 30.

The pockets 40 are each provided with closure means 52 at the pocket opening 50 in order to releasably secure the pocket opening 50 closed when articles are packed within the pockets during travel. The closure means 52 may be any of a variety of non-metallic fastening devices such as, but not limited to, plastic or nylon zippers, plastic or nylon snaps, an elastic band or hook and loop fasteners. The closure means 52 helps to hold the panel 42 snug against the articles contained within the pockets 40, thereby holding the articles securely therein without excessive movement. To further secure the various clothing articles within the pockets, straps 56 are provided. Specifically, strap segments 56 are provided within the interior of at least some

of the pockets 40 and are secured at one end. The strap segments 56 extend across the width of the pockets and are secured together with the use of clips or buckles 58. The strap segments 56 may be adjustable in length so that when secured together, using the clips 58, the straps are held snugly against the clothing articles, thereby preventing excessive movement of the articles within the pockets. As seen in Figures 3 and 4, the straps 56 within the pockets may further be used as a means for hanging dress slacks 110 within the pocket. This helps to minimize wrinkling of trousers or dress slacks by holding them in the folded position, as seen in Figures 3 and 4.

The inner lining 30 may further be provided with straps 60 and other securing means for holding articles outside of the pockets. The straps 60 may be secured at opposite free ends with the use of hook and loop fasteners, or other releasable fastening means, and are particularly suited for securing rolled articles of clothing, such as t-shirts and socks.

It is important to note that the entire garment 10, including all components on the outer shell 14, inner lining 30, and pockets 40, is free of any metallic elements which would trigger an alarm on a metal detecting apparatus, such as those used at security checkpoints in airports.

While the invention has been shown and described according to a preferred embodiment, it is recognized that departures from the instant disclosure are contemplated within the spirit and scope of the invention.